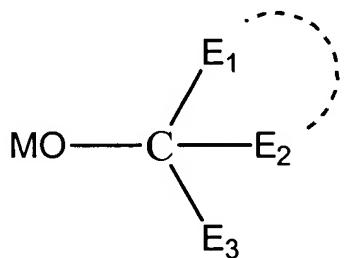


Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the prior application:

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (original) An ammonium alkoxide having the formula



wherein

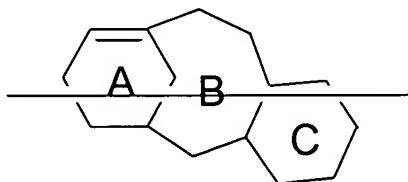
M is tetraalkylammonium;

E<sub>1</sub> and E<sub>2</sub> and the carbon to which they are attached comprise a carbocyclic or heterocyclic skeleton containing about 6 to 20 ring atoms, the hetero atoms being oxygen; and

E<sub>3</sub> is hydrogen or a hydrocarbon.

2. (original) The alkoxide of claim 1 wherein E<sub>3</sub> is hydrogen.
3. (original) The alkoxide of claim 1 wherein M is tetramethylammonium.
4. (original) The alkoxide of claim 1 wherein M is tetrabutylammonium.
5. (original) The alkoxide of claim 1 wherein E<sub>3</sub> is hydrogen and M is tetramethylammonium.
6. (original) The alkoxide of claim 1 wherein E<sub>3</sub> is hydrogen and M is tetrabutylammonium.

7. (currently amended) The alkoxide of claim 1 wherein  $E_1$  and  $E_2$  and the carbon atom to which they are attached comprise a tricyclic taxane nucleus, and  $E_3$  is hydrogen the carbocyclic skeleton corresponding to rings A, B and C of structure



8. (currently amended) The alkoxide of claim 1 wherein  $E_1$  and  $E_2$  and the carbon atom to which they are attached comprise a tetracyclic taxane nucleus, and  $E_3$  is hydrogen the carbocyclic skeleton corresponding to rings A, B, C and the oxetane ring of structure

